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# EmpowerYouth: A Toolkit for Youth Engagement and Climate Change

The toolkit has been created in the frames of the “EmpowerYouth: Enabling Youth Organizations to Shape Decision-Making on Issues that Matter Most to Young People” long-term Erasmus+ programme, which is implemented by a consortium of

- Romanian Center for European Policies (CRPE/Romania)
- Gyumri “Youth Initiative Centre” NGO (YIC/Armenia)
- Center for Research and Advocacy in EU Policies (CAREP/Moldova)
- Association Atinati (ATINATI/Georgia)

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## The aim of the toolkit is to:

- Recognize different forms of civic engagement and the role of youth in shaping communities.
- Learn how to identify challenges, engage stakeholders, and create action plans for civic and environmental change.
- Understand key environmental issues, their impact, and how youth can contribute to climate solutions.
- Analyze youth participation trends, political engagement, and climate policies at local, national, and EU levels.
- Discover EU programs, funding opportunities, and practical ways to stay engaged in civic and environmental action.

## Part 1. Promoting Youth Civic Engagement

### 1.1 What is civic engagement?

**Ask the participants:** “In one word, how would you define civic engagement?”

**Instructions:** Open [Mentimeter](#) and create a [word cloud question](#).

Encourage them to think of words that describe active citizenship, participation, or community involvement. Share the Mentimeter link or QR code with participants. Show the generated word cloud on a projector or screen. Highlight the most frequently mentioned responses. Encourage a short debate on key terms, linking them to real-life civic actions.

### 1.2 What is civic involvement?

**Ask the participants:** “What is civic involvement? Why do you think civic involvement is important?”

**Hint:** Civic involvement means taking action to improve one’s community and encouraging others to do the same. It encompasses not just one action but various ways individuals can contribute to society.

**Ask the participants:** Could you name some examples of civic involvement?

**Instructions:** Encourage them to think broadly such as volunteering, voting, activism, community projects, etc.

- Write down or collect their answers on a whiteboard, flipchart, or directly on the presentation slide.
- Summarize the different forms of civic engagement mentioned.



### 1.3 Rights and responsibilities

**Ask the participants:** What do you consider your rights and responsibilities as young people?

**Instructions:** Explain the difference:

- **Rights** = freedoms and entitlements they should have (e.g., education, free speech).
- **Responsibilities** = duties they are expected to uphold (e.g., respecting others, following rules).

**Hint:** Ask each participant to list at least one right and one responsibility they believe is important.

- Summarize key rights and responsibilities discussed. Choose the top five rights and top five responsibilities they agree on.
- Emphasize that rights come with responsibilities, and both are crucial for an engaged civic life.

### 1.4 Forms of Civic Engagement

**Ask the participants:** Ask participants the following questions, one by one:

- If you could improve or transform something in your community, what would it be?
- What essential resources, opportunities, or initiatives are missing?

**Instructions:** Explain that civic engagement starts with recognizing local needs and proposing solutions. Summarize the most common needs discussed. Conclude by emphasizing that identifying problems is the first step toward community action.

### 1.5 Exploring forms of civic engagement

**Explain:** Civic engagement can take many forms: from protests to volunteering or community events.

**Ask the participants:** What do you think are the most common ways people engage in their communities?

**Instructions:** Display images representing different forms of civic engagement, such as volunteer work, protests, social work, community events, and voting.

**Ask the participants:** What do you see in these images? What forms of engagement stand out to you? If you had to join one of these initiatives today, which one would it be and why? Has anyone here ever participated in a similar initiative? What was your role?

## Volunteer job



"European Solidarity Corps" program international volunteers' meeting with local youth  
© Youth Initiative Centre, 2024

## Community events



Within the framework of "Euroclub Gyumri", members of the "Young European Ambassadors" initiative carried out a tree planting.  
© Youth Initiative Centre, 2024

## Encouraging young people to a healthy lifestyle



"Young Citizens Act: Youth as Advocates and Activists of Local Democracy" program  
© Youth Initiative Centre, 2024



"You can!" flashmob in Gyumri to encourage volunteering  
© Youth Initiative Centre, 2012

## Engaging with local authorities



"Capacity Development of Local Government-CSO Representatives: Formation of a Youth Environment and Provision of Community Youth Services" project activity.  
© Youth Initiative Centre, 2024

## 1.6 Youth participation in civic and political life (EU level)

**Instructions:** Present and debate the figures.

### EU level participation:

- **56% of young people surveyed use social media to stay informed about the EU. TV is the second most important channel** through which young people stay informed about the EU (selected by **49%**). Online press, podcasts and/or news platforms are third (selected by 33%).
- Young people consider **voting in local, national or European elections (38%)** and **engaging in social media (32%)** the two most effective actions for making young people's voices heard by decision-makers.
- **64% of youth have participated in one or more youth organizations over the last 12 months.** Most have participated in a sports club (33%), followed by a youth club, leisure club, or any kind of youth organisation (18%), an organization with volunteering activities (17%), or a cultural organisation (15%). Ten percent of the young people surveyed have participated in an organisation active in climate change/environmental issues.
- **43% of youth participated in a professional, volunteering, learning or sporting activity in another EU country.**
- 36% of youth who participated in activities in another EU country feel that this made them more aware of other cultures and values. 35% think it increases their interest in foreign languages or their self-confidence. 24% felt more European after attending such activities.
- The most common reasons for not being involved are lack of financial means (37%) and lack of interest (28%).
- Young people's main expectations from the EU for their generation are: preserving peace, reinforcing international security and promoting international cooperation (37%), fighting poverty and economic and social inequalities (34%), promoting human rights, democracy and common European values (30%) and increasing job opportunities for young people (28%).

### Information Channels:

- **Television:** 56% of Armenians consider television their primary source for political and social news.
- **Digital Platforms:** 56% of Armenians also rely on digital platforms for news, highlighting the significance of online media. 59% of respondents reported using Viber and WhatsApp several times a day, while Facebook and YouTube followed closely behind with 58% use. 58% of Armenians use "social networks, blogs, vlogs and podcasts" as their top sources of political and social news.

### Civic and Political Participation:

- **Volunteering:** Only **15.9%** of Armenian youth have engaged in volunteer activities over the past year. 26.1% among those who have volunteered have done so in school or university and 21.6% in NGOs.
- **Political Interest:** 59.1% of Armenian youth express a lack of interest in politics, indicating political indifference. 52.1% of youth with higher education are comparably less likely to report that they are not interested in politics at all, than 63.1% of incomplete and completed secondary education. 54.7% under 17 years old are slightly less likely to be politically indifferent those in higher age groups: 18-24 61.5% and 25-29 62.1%). 65.3% young people in the capital tend to be slightly more indifferent to politics than 57.3% in other cities, towns or 60.0% living in villages.

## Barriers to Participation:

- **Trust in Media:** A survey by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation in 2022 found that only **12%** of young Armenians trust the media, suggesting that media distrust may hinder civic engagement.

**Source:**

Youth study Armenia (in)dependence generation, 2023

Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung South Caucasus (FES)

[https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/armenien/20652.pdf?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/armenien/20652.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

Media Market Analysis: Armenia

Zinc Network March 2024

[https://internews.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Media-Market-Analysis-Report.pdf?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://internews.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Media-Market-Analysis-Report.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

Flash Eurobarometer 545, April 2024

Youth and democracy

<https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/3181>

## 1.7 Youth participation in civic and political life (EU level)

**Instructions:** Present and debate the figures.

In terms of the best ways to get people's voices heard by decision-makers at the national level, **voting in elections** is perceived as the most effective way to have voices heard at the national level (68%), though younger people (15-24) find it less impactful (55%) compared to older people (72%). Among younger respondents, **demonstrations** are the second most preferred method (33%), while older age groups favour **petitions (25%)** and **citizens' debates or assemblies (19%)** as alternative ways to influence decision-makers. Additionally, younger people are more inclined toward **online debates (21%)**, whereas older respondents prioritize **traditional participation methods** like elections and petitions.

Source:

Special Eurobarometer 517 Report, Future of Europe (2021) - <https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/2554>

## 1.8 Youth participation in civic and political life (national level)

**Instructions:** Present and debate the figures.

- 20% of youth have participated in solving local community issues, while 9.1% have donated to social or political organizations. Only 3.8% have engaged in political parties or groups.

**Source:**

Youth study Armenia (in)dependence generation, 2023

Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung South Caucasus (FES)

[https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/armenien/20652.pdf?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/armenien/20652.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

## 1.9 Impact of youth participation and democratic values (Armenia)

**Instructions:** Present and debate the figures.

- Despite low overall political engagement, 67% of Armenian youth believe they can influence decisions in the country. Political interest remains low, with 59.1% reporting indifference, especially in Yerevan (65.3%).
- 20% of youth have participated in solving community issues, while 9.1% have donated to social or political organizations. Only 3.8% have engaged in political parties. Participation in protests, petitions, and political discussions remains minimal.
- Youth expectations from democracy focus on human rights, social justice, and government accountability, though many feel the political system is unresponsive to their needs.

**Sources:**

*Youth study Armenia (in)dependence generation, 2023*

*Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung South Caucasus (FES)*

[https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/armenien/20652.pdf?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/armenien/20652.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

*Dialogues about tomorrow: Armenia youth debates, 2023*

*National Democratic Institute (NDI)*

[https://www.ndi.org/our-stories/dialogues-about-tomorrow-armenia-youth-debates?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://www.ndi.org/our-stories/dialogues-about-tomorrow-armenia-youth-debates?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

## 1.10 Forms of Civic Engagement (Armenia)

**Instructions:** Present and debate the figures.

**Ask the participants:** How would you explain the data?

1. Youth Civic Engagement:
  - 67% of youth believe they can influence national decisions.
  - Political system responsiveness is a significant concern for young people, contributing to their overall disengagement.
2. Barriers to Participation:
  - Systemic barriers and political indifference are key reasons for low youth engagement in Armenia.

**Sources:**

*Youth study Armenia (in)dependence generation, 2023*

*Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung South Caucasus (FES)*

[https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/armenien/20652.pdf?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/armenien/20652.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

*Dialogues about tomorrow: Armenia youth debates, 2023*

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[https://www.ndi.org/our-stories/dialogues-about-tomorrow-armenia-youth-debates?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://www.ndi.org/our-stories/dialogues-about-tomorrow-armenia-youth-debates?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

## 1.11 Youth participation in national or European projects (example of Armenia)

**Instructions:** Present and debate the figures.

- **2015-2017:** Approximately 1,300 Armenian students and academic staff participated in Erasmus+ mobility projects during this period.
- **2014-2020:** Around 2,500 Armenian students and academic staff engaged in study or teaching opportunities in Europe, with an additional 8,000 young Armenians participating in short-term exchanges, training, and volunteering projects under Erasmus+.

Sources:

**EU – Armenia Relations**

[https://enlargement.ec.europa.eu/european-neighbourhood-policy/countries-region/armenia\\_en?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://enlargement.ec.europa.eu/european-neighbourhood-policy/countries-region/armenia_en?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

Factsheets and statistics on Erasmus+

[https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/resources-and-tools/statistics-and-factsheets?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/resources-and-tools/statistics-and-factsheets?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

## 1.12 Stages of Civic Engagement

**A three-step approach:**

1. The beginnings. Identifying the need or the challenge you want to address
2. Documenting the needs we identified and the division of responsibilities
3. Preparing our action plan

## 1.13 Identifying community challenges and needs

**Instructions:** Ask the participants to give 2-3 examples of things they would like to improve in their community: What challenge/need do we want to address?

**What is important to keep in mind when identifying the need:**

1. Easy to understand,
2. Impact on the community/neighborhood/ school if we want a group action,
3. Preferably not devising the community,
4. Planning a campaign with clear objectives, measures, and indicators.

**Instructions:** Discuss about new bicycle lanes, better sidewalks, pollution, waste recycling, monitoring public authorities, joining a civic group and look over the images below. Conclude by emphasizing that **civic engagement starts with identifying clear, actionable needs.**



Bicycle lanes in Yerevan  
Photo © Armenian Public Radio



Boo Mountain Bike Park in Vanadzor  
Photo © Boo Mountain Bike Park



Transcaucasian trail Armenia; new signs for hikers  
Photo © Transcaucasian trail



Waste management system in Yerevan  
Photo © Yerevan Municipality

## 1.14 Documenting the needs we identified and the division of responsibilities

**Instructions:** Present the participants with the following documentation:

1. Identify as much information as you can on the need you identified (when it started, whom it affects, what are the consequences of inaction, who can help us or who can oppose, how did other communities resolve similar issues, etc).
2. Who can resolve our issue? To whom do we address it? (For example, the local city hall, police, our school, the Parliament, the Environmental Guard, etc.) Depending on the issue, someone else can be responsible or help us solve it.
3. **Things do not change if we do not take action.** Most times, there is an important connection between our (in)actions and the public decision process, but also a gap between our (in)actions and what we can consider that we can influence through our civic involvement.

## 1.15 Preparing our action plan (exercise)

**Instructions:** Before presenting solutions, ask participants to identify and name the steps they would take using a 3-step approach (Problem → Decision-Makers → Action), then introduce the structured table to guide real civic engagement strategies. Then show the following examples and debate one of them.

Issue/need	Who to address it	What can they do?	Potential actions	Allies	Things to consider
<b>Air pollution and lack of data</b>	City Hall (mayor, environmental department), local council	Install air quality sensors; develop an air quality action plan	Petition; attend public meetings and demand action	Citizens, NGOs, schools, health experts	Ensure the issue is measurable (data, reports); be aware of budget constraints and track government promises
<b>Green participatory budgeting</b>	City hall (budget/financial department), local council	Allocate a section of the city budget for environmental projects	advocate for a green budget in town hall meetings; create public awareness campaigns/strategy	Youth, environmental groups, teachers	Show success stories from other cities; time efforts around budget planning cycles
<b>Waste management and recycling</b>	City Hall, waste management operators	Publish recycling data; improve waste management policies	Request access to waste data; organize audits/meetings with local groups; launch a reporting platform for citizens	Activists, schools, media	Ensure regular updates from local authorities; use social media to highlight the identified issues on waste
<b>Textile waste management</b>	City Hall, waste management operators, retailers	Analyze textile waste at the local level; develop waste management policies; set up and promote collecting and recycling points	Organize community events such as clothing swaps or repair workshops and invite local decision-makers	NGOs, environmental groups, schools, second-hand and thrift stores	Use online and offline communication methods to raise awareness about textile waste and fast fashion among locals
<b>Food and organic waste management</b>	City Hall, waste management operators, restaurants, grocery stores	Implement food waste reduction policies; financially support individual and municipal composting; encourage businesses to donate surplus food	Organize local events such as community kitchens or cooking workshops and invite authority representatives	NGOs, local food banks, schools and universities	Take into consideration the legal and logistical challenges of food donation; make use of social media to promote local initiatives

## 1.16 Examples of successful civic involvement (national level)

**Instructions:** Discuss impactful campaigns or movements in Armenia with the group. Describe their effects and suggest relevant pictures to accompany the discussion.

**Amulsar:** In 2018, 2019, and 2020, environmental activists gathered in protest against the Amulsar gold mine, a project they feared would endanger the region's water sources, biodiversity, and the famous Jermuk mineral springs. Chanting slogans and holding banners, they blocked roads leading to the site, demanding the government revoke mining permits. Despite police intervention and political debates, the activists remained firm, arguing that short-term economic benefits should not come at the cost of irreversible environmental damage. Their protests sparked national conversations about sustainable development and the balance between economic growth and ecological preservation.

More: <https://hetq.am/en/tag/Amulsar>



Photo © Armenian Environmental Front

**Save Teghut** is an environmental movement in Armenia that aims to protect the Teghut forest from a copper and molybdenum mining project. The campaign, which began in the early 2010s, raised concerns about the environmental impact, including deforestation and biodiversity loss. Activists, local residents, and environmentalists protested the project and pushed for more sustainable development. Despite challenges, the movement continues to advocate for stronger environmental protections in Armenia.

More: <https://armenianweekly.com/2012/02/21/save-teghut-redefines-environmental-activism-in-armenia/>



Photo © PanARMENIAN Photo

**Mashtots Garden (Mashtotsi Purak):** In 2012, environmental activists in Yerevan staged a protest to save Mashtots Park from commercial development. The city had allowed the construction of kiosks in the park, sparking outrage among activists who saw it as an attack on public green spaces. Protesters set up a tent camp, held peaceful demonstrations, and engaged in sit-ins to block construction. The movement gained widespread public support, and after weeks of pressure, Armenia's president ordered the removal of the kiosks, marking a rare victory for civic activism in the country. The Mashtots Park protests became a symbol of environmental and urban activism in Armenia.

More: <https://hetq.am/en/tag/mashtoc-garden>



Photo © evnmag.com

The **Trchkan Waterfall** natural monument, the highest waterfall in Armenia, was threatened by a hydroelectric power plant project in 2011. Activists, environmentalists, and locals launched protests to protect the site, emphasizing its ecological and touristic value. Their efforts led to a government decision to halt the project, ensuring the waterfall remained a protected natural monument. This conservation success highlighted the power of civic activism in Armenia.

More: <https://hetq.am/en/tag/trchkan>



Photo © Yeghia Nersesian, Պահպանենք Թռչկանի ջրվեժը Facebook group

**Green Green:** This Initiative promotes responsible ownership of Armenia's environment and sustainable resource use. Through public events, eco-awareness campaigns, and community action, it tackles ecological challenges, revitalizes urban green spaces, and encourages an eco-friendly lifestyle. By sharing best practices and building partnerships, "Green Green" empowers Armenians to create a cleaner, greener future.

More: <https://greengreen.am/en>



Photo © Green Green Yerevan

**Armenia Tree Project (ATP)** helps Armenians use trees to improve their lives and protect the environment. Guided by the principles of self-sufficiency and conservation, ATP prioritizes those in need while preserving Armenia's indigenous ecosystem. By planting with hope for the future, ATP creates economic opportunities, strengthens border villages, and enriches Armenia's environment.

More: <https://www.armeniatree.org/>



Photo © DiasporArm

The **[Wildlife Rescue Center \(WRC\)](#)** is Armenia's first facility for rescuing and rehabilitating red-listed species. Since 2016, it has worked with government agencies and NGOs to combat illegal captivity and the wildlife trade.

A key project focuses on rescuing red-listed brown bears, promoting legislative changes, sanctuaries, and release centers. Through education and advocacy, WRC fights animal cruelty and exploitation, ensuring a safer future for Armenia's wildlife.

More: <https://wrc.am/en/>



Photo © Roger Allen – Daily Mail

The **[Caucasus Wildlife Refuge \(CWR\)](#)** is the first privately protected area in the South Caucasus, spanning 30,000 hectares. Since 2011, it has served as a crucial habitat for endangered species like the Caucasian leopard, Bezoar goats, and Brown bears while buffering the Khosrov Forest State Reserve.

Through hi-tech trap cameras and remote monitoring, CWR ensures 24/7 wildlife protection, tracks population growth, and combats poaching. Conservation efforts have led to a significant increase in red-listed species.

More: <http://cwr.fpwc.org/>



Photo © Caucasus Wildlife Refuge.

**LATE** is a textile recycling initiative in Armenia that promotes sustainability and social responsibility. By collecting and recycling textile waste and used clothing, LATE reduces environmental impact while supporting communities in need.

The initiative collaborates with local organizations to develop a sustainable fashion ecosystem in Armenia, fostering eco-friendly practices and circular economy solutions.



Photo © LATE

### Other forms of successful civic involvement:

- The [“Restart” initiative](#) has been actively campaigning for the right to academic deferment for students in 2017
- The [“Citizen Observers” initiative](#) has successfully mobilized thousands of citizens to monitor elections, ensuring greater transparency and reducing electoral fraud.
- [#ElectricYerevan](#) was a 2015 mass protest movement in Armenia against electricity price hikes, driven by concerns over corruption and economic hardship, leading to clashes with police and partial government concessions.
- The [“Protect Against the Public Transport Tariff”](#) movement, also known as "Վճարում ենք 100 դրամ" ("We Pay 100 Drams"), successfully prevented a 2013 fare hike in Yerevan through protests and civic activism.
- [“Enhancing Youth Participation in Policy-Making in Armenia”](#) is an initiative by the Youth Organizations Union of Armenia, which includes seven youth-oriented non-governmental organizations. It aims to strengthen youth engagement in governance through capacity-building, policy dialogue, and advocacy, addressing barriers to participation and promoting active civic involvement.

**A successful public campaign can include very small activities (a free sidewalk, organizing a debate, bicycle parking at your school, air quality sensors, etc.) or multiple or large-scale activities. It only depends on your needs.**

## Part 2. Climate change and youth engagement

### 2.1 What is climate change?

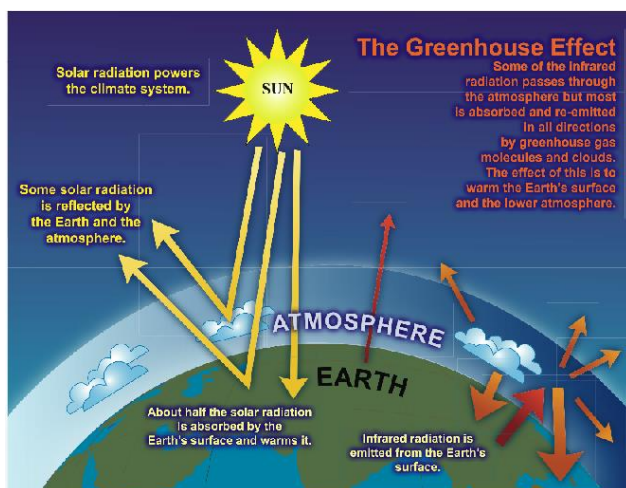
**Instructions:** Use [Mentimeter](#) and create a [Word Cloud question](#) for each of the following questions:

- What is one action youth can take for climate justice?
- Have you noticed any climate-related changes in your community?
- Share the Mentimeter link or QR code with participants. Display the Word Cloud results on a screen.
- Connect their answers to real-life youth-led climate initiatives (e.g., Fridays for Future, local clean-up campaigns, tree planting projects).
- Ask participants: Have any of you ever participated in a climate-related initiative? What was your experience?
- Conclude with a reminder that: Small actions, when multiplied, can lead to significant change.

### 2.2 What is climate change?

**Instructions:** Present the following definition and show the picture below:

Climate change refers to long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns caused by natural causes (e.g., solar activity and volcanic eruptions) and human activities (e.g., fossil fuel burning and deforestation). Since the Industrial Revolution, human actions have been the primary driver of climate change, primarily due to the burning of fossil fuels like coal, oil, and gas.



### 2.3 Climate change explained

**Interactions:** Watch this [video](#):

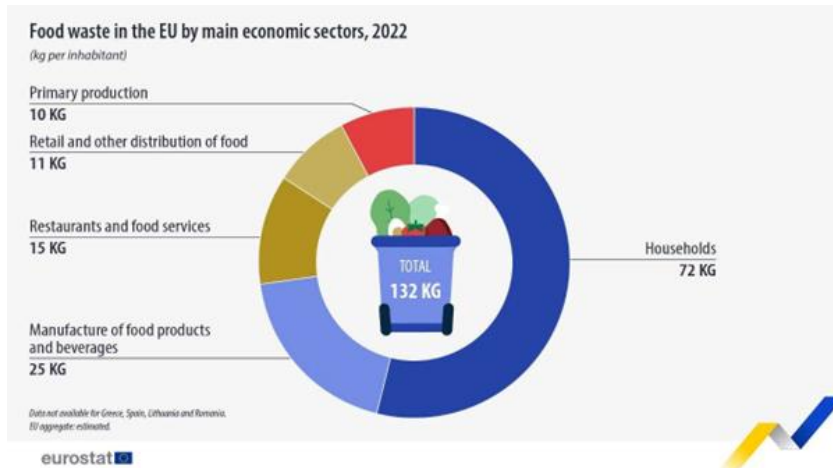
After playing the video, ask the participants to explain climate change in their own words.

Now, let's explore key concepts that impact both individuals and communities: **food waste, energy efficiency, and fast fashion**. These issues shape our daily lives, but how can we take action? Together, we will discuss their impact and debate solutions for real engagement in building a more sustainable future.

## 2.4 Explaining food waste

**Instructions:** Present the following explanation.

**Food Waste** refers to any food and/or inedible parts lost or wasted in the food chains that need to be recovered or disposed of (by composting, anaerobic digestion, bioenergy production, incineration, or storage of organic waste).



Source: Eurostat. Food waste in the EU by main economic sectors, 2022.

## National data on food waste (Armenia)

**Instructions:** Present and discuss the figures.

### Armenia

- 5% of the available food is wasted in Armenia. The loss – due to a lack of markets and storage facilities - is the highest for vegetables (21 %), melons (15 %), and potatoes (8.5 %)
- According to unofficial and official data, around 50% of the waste ending up in landfills is organic.
- 32% of people in Armenia are poor, and 20% are food insecure. The analysis per location categories showed higher levels of food insecurity in rural (24%) and other urban (19%) areas compared to Yerevan (9%).

Sources:

*National Strategic Review of Food Security and Nutrition*  
United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) in Armenia, January 2018  
<https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000104914/download/#page=30>

*Food Security and Vulnerability Assessment in Armenia*  
United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) in Armenia, March 2024  
<https://www.wfp.org/publications/food-security-and-vulnerability-assessment-armenia>

## 2.5 Explaining energy efficiency

**Instructions:** Present the following explanation:

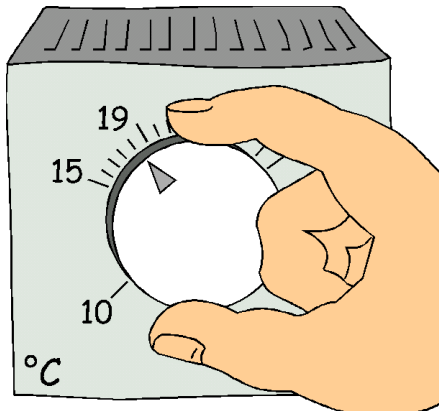
**Energy efficiency:** using less energy to provide the same service. Almost all of us tend to leave the tap water running while brushing our teeth or not switch off the lights after leaving a room. The great news is that by sticking to these basic rules, we can literally save 40% of energy in our own household.

## 2.6 Tips and tricks for saving energy

**Instructions:** Present briefly the following example and show the picture below:

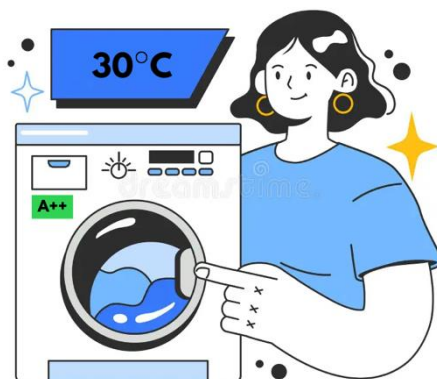
Bedroom

- Use LED bulbs; they last longer and consume up to 80% less energy than incandescent ones.
- Turn off the lights when you leave the room.
- Use the thermostat wisely - Lowering the temperature by just 1°C can save about 7% of the energy used.



Bathroom

- Use the fan only when necessary—it saves both water and energy.
- Choose a quick shower instead of a bath - A low-flow showerhead can reduce water consumption by 25-60%.
- Turn off the water while brushing your teeth or washing your hands—you can save dozens of liters each week!



## Living room

- Set the air conditioner 1°C warmer to reduce electricity use by 10%.
- For hot summer days, use blinds and curtains to block excessive sunlight.
- During sunny days, maximize natural light to reduce the need for artificial lighting by 16-20%.

## Kitchen

- Use energy-efficient appliances (Class A) to lower energy consumption.
- Reduce boiling time by 50%—cover the pot with a lid.
- Set the washing machine to 30°C and don't use too much detergent - it can lead to a longer rinse cycle.

For more info:

<https://www.seai.ie/sites/default/files/publications/SEAI-ReduceYourUse-Booklet.pdf>

## 2.7 Explaining fast fashion

**Instructions:** Present the following explanation and show the picture below:

**Fast Fashion:** “Fast fashion” is what we call the rapid and cheap design, manufacture, and marketing of huge (like really HUGE) volumes of clothing. This way of producing garments often uses low-quality materials and exploits low-paid labour in other countries (<https://www.greenpeace.org/aotearoa/story/the-dark-side-of-fast-fashion/#WhatIsFastFashion>).



The tragic ending of fast fashion clothing



Child labour - A child working in a textile factory

The term “fast fashion” was coined by the New York Times to describe Zara’s mission to allow garments to go from the design stage to being sold in stores in just 15 days. The biggest players in the fast fashion world include Zara, Shein, UNIQLO, Forever 21, and H&M (<https://earth.org/fast-fashions-detrimental-effect-on-the-environment/>).

For more info, watch videos like:

- Fast Fashion Exposed - The Effects of the Growing Industry: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=anxQSEYe\\_xw&ab\\_channel=GreenMatchUK](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=anxQSEYe_xw&ab_channel=GreenMatchUK)
- The Impact of Fast Fashion on the Environment and Climate Change: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H\\_xlJelpKtA&ab\\_channel=GrantGilmore](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H_xlJelpKtA&ab_channel=GrantGilmore)

## 2.8 Climate change glossary of terms (interactive learning game)

**Instructions:** Create a grid with climate-related terms in four categories:

1. Climate manifestations: global warming, heat waves, rising sea levels, desertification
2. Human-caused factors: deforestation, air pollution, carbon footprint, fossil fuel
3. Natural processes: greenhouse effect, ozone layer, photosynthesis, ocean currents
4. Solutions: renewable energy (solar, wind, hydro), afforestation, energy efficiency, recycling (the last of the 5 R’s: refuse, reuse, repair, repurpose)

**Instructions:** Share a copy of the grid with participants via [Kahoot](#) or [Mentimeter](#).

Explain the Rules:

- The facilitator will read out definitions or give examples related to a term.
- Instead of calling out terms directly, participants guess the correct term from the grid. For example: *This term describes the total amount of greenhouse gases emitted by an individual or organization.* (Answer: Carbon Footprint)
- The first participant/team to guess correctly earns a point.

Play the Game:

- Divide the participants into 4 teams, each focusing on one category.
- Rotate between teams, allowing each to answer a definition in their category.
- Encourage discussion and teamwork if teams are unsure of an answer.

#### **Debrief & Discussion:**

- After the game, ask participants to reflect using Mentimeter or a Google Doc: Which terms were most familiar to you? Which concepts needed more explanation? How do these terms relate to climate justice and youth engagement?
- Discuss how understanding these concepts helps young people advocate for climate action. Summarize key takeaways and link them to real-world issues (e.g., how air pollution affects health, the importance of afforestation).

## **2.9 EU Climate Objectives**

**Instructions:** Present data and debate the figures.

The **European Green Deal** is the EU's comprehensive strategy to transform Europe into the first climate-neutral continent by 2050.

To achieve climate neutrality, the EU has set **three major goals**:

**2030 goal:** Reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by at least **55%** compared to 1990 levels.

To meet this goal, EU member states must develop **National Energy and Climate Plans (NECPs)**, focusing on:

- Reducing emissions & increasing renewable energy:
  - **How? For example**, implementing subsidies for solar panel installations on homes and businesses.
- Ensuring energy security (having a stable energy supply)
  - Diversifying gas supply sources instead of relying on a single supplier, as the EU countries did until Russia's invasion of Ukraine.
- Improving energy efficiency (using less energy for the same tasks)
  - By using the tips and tricks presented earlier, but on a larger scale.
- Building a stronger internal energy market (making energy trade smoother across the EU)
  - Constructing more cross-border energy interconnections, like the France-Spain electricity link.
- Investing in research, innovation, and competitiveness
  - Promoting digitalization in energy, such as AI-driven energy management systems.

**2040 goal:** Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by **90%**.

- **2050 goal:** Reach **net-zero emissions** and become a climate-neutral continent.

## 2.10 Current data on climate and youth

**Instructions:** Present the following data:

- 67.9% of Armenian adolescents and 66.0% of adults are very concerned about climate change in their communities.
- 90% of adolescents desire to learn more about climate change, with schoolteachers and school administrations being their preferred sources of information.
- 76% of adolescents and 77% of adults are prepared to take measures to prevent or lessen the impact of climate change in their communities, even if it means altering some personal habits.
- 96,2% of Armenian adolescents have heard about climate change compared to 79,8% of adults.
- 68,4% of Armenian adolescents have heard about the Earth's changing climate and weather patterns at school, 43,7% on the TV, or 35,5% on the Internet, while 81,9% of adults have learned about it on TV, 44,8% on the Internet, or 34,7% on social media.
- 67.9% of Armenian adolescents and 66.0% of adults are very concerned about climate change in their community, while 58.4% of adolescents and 70.3% of adults are very concerned about climate change in Armenia.

**Sources:**

*Climate change and adolescent participation in Armenia*  
UNICEF Armenia 2022

<https://www.unicef.org/armenia/en/reports/climate-change-and-adolescent-participation-armenia>

**Ask the participants:**

- In your opinion, why are younger people more concerned about climate change than older people?
- 76% of adolescents and 77% of adults are ready to take action to prevent or lessen the impact of climate change in their communities, including compromising some of their habits. Do you agree? Why or why not?

## 2.11 Attitudes of Armenians Toward the Environment

**Instructions:** Show the following data:

**Perception of environmental impact:**

- 61% of Armenians are totally concerned about climate change and its impact on the country, highlighting strong public awareness of environmental issues.
- 65% believe taking action to prevent climate change is very important, emphasizing the need for solutions.
- When asked about sustainable solutions, 62% of respondents prioritized solar energy, followed by wind (39%) and hydropower (34%) as key renewable energy sources for Armenia's future.
- 72% support tree planting, while only 4% currently use bicycles instead of cars or public transport, showing room for growth in eco-friendly habits.



**What is the circular economy?** In practice, it implies reducing waste to a minimum. When a product reaches the end of its life, its materials are kept within the economy wherever possible, thanks to recycling. These can be productively used again and again, thereby creating further value.

Play the [video](#) and show the picture below:

The circular economy is:

- Armenia is moving toward stricter waste management laws, including the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) legislation, which will make producers responsible for post-consumption waste. Additionally, to reduce environmental harm, Armenia has banned plastic bags under 50 microns.
- Steps are being taken to enhance waste management regulations and combat illegal dumping, but enforcement remains challenging. Organizations like the Acopian Center for the Environment are working on policy reforms.
- Restoring nature through conservation projects: Armenia has several reforestation and biodiversity conservation programs, including initiatives by ATP (Armenia Tree Project) and WWF Armenia, to protect endangered species and restore natural habitats.
- Programs like EU4Environment and CirculUP! support the development of sustainable technologies, eco-friendly businesses, and circular economy models in Armenia.
- Various NGOs and institutions promote climate change and waste reduction education, including public campaigns on recycling and sustainable consumption.
- Armenia has implemented environmental taxes to mitigate ecological impacts, primarily targeting air pollution, waste disposal, and industrial emissions.
- Armenia revised vehicle-related environmental taxes to promote cleaner transportation, implementing tax exemptions for electric vehicles starting in 2024.

As such, Europeans, especially young people, increasingly recognize that environmental issues impact their health and daily lives. Their priorities focus on practical solutions such as circular economy initiatives, stronger regulations, and nature restoration—highlighting the need for policy action and citizen engagement to drive meaningful change.

*Source:*

Public opinion survey on climate change and renewable energy in Armenia  
Westminster Foundation for Democracy, 2022

<https://www.wfd.org/what-we-do/resources/public-opinion-survey-climate-change-and-renewable-energy-armenia>

## 2.12 The effects of climate change on children

**Instructions:** Show the following data:

- Armenia is highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, with concerns about **school attendance**, **health**, and **mental well-being** due to extreme weather events like heatwaves, droughts, and floods.
- **45.7% of children** perceive the impact of climate change on their quality of life as "**Mostly Negative**", with immediate concerns about malnutrition, illness, and land deterioration.
- **45.7% of children** reported that climate change has an immediate impact on **school attendance**, particularly during extreme weather events such as heavy snowfall and heatwaves.
- In rural areas, where **71.7% of surveyed children** reside, access to education is further hindered by poor infrastructure and frequent natural disasters like landslides and mudflows.
- **Heatwaves** and **droughts** are the most significant climate hazards affecting children in Armenia, leading to school closures and health issues such as headaches and difficulty adapting to extreme temperatures.
- **Adolescents** are concerned about the impact of **global warming** on their education, with **40.6%** reporting that extreme weather conditions disrupt their ability to attend school regularly.
- In Armenia, **30.4% of children** recognize that climate change impacts their access to education, with concerns about **hazardous jobs** and **economic decline** further exacerbating the situation.

Source:

*Climate Landscape Analysis for Children in Armenia*

UNICEF Working Paper, April 2018

[https://www.unicef.org/armenia/media/1926/file/Climate%20landscape%20analysis%20for%20children%20in%20Armenia%20.pdf?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://www.unicef.org/armenia/media/1926/file/Climate%20landscape%20analysis%20for%20children%20in%20Armenia%20.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

*Learning to see the climate crisis: Children and Young People's Perceptions of Climate Change and Environmental Transformation in Armenia*

World Vision Armenia, 2023

[https://www.wvi.org/sites/default/files/2024-01/Climate%20change%20research%20Armenia.pdf?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://www.wvi.org/sites/default/files/2024-01/Climate%20change%20research%20Armenia.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

## 2.13 Debunking Myths about the European Green Deal

**Ask the participants:** Have you heard any myths or disinformation about the European Green Deal?

**Hint:** Explain that misconceptions can spread easily and that fact-checking is essential for informed decision-making.

**Brainstorming myths: Instructions:** Write down or collect responses from participants on a whiteboard or a digital tool (e.g., Mentimeter or Padlet). Encourage them to share rumours, social media claims, or statements they have heard about EU climate policies.

Present a list of common myths and reveal the facts behind them:

1. **Myth:** The EU is forcing us to eat insects.  
**Truth:** The EU only regulates insect-based foods so that those who want to eat them can do it safely. This is part of a broader EU strategy to reduce the environmental impact of the food supply chain ([Euronews](#)).

2. **Myth:** The green transition is too expensive.  
**Truth:** Coal power generation is 35% efficient, meaning 65% of energy is wasted in production and transport. In comparison, electricity powered by renewable sources is virtually 100% efficient at end use and can be produced and managed locally ([World Economic Forum](#)).
3. **Myth:** Climate change has always happened, so we should not worry about it.  
**Truth:** The Earth is heating up at its fastest rate in at least 2,000 years, and it is about 1.2°C hotter than it was in pre-industrial times. The last ten years have been the warmest on record, with 2023 smashing global temperature records.
4. **Myth:** We do not need to worry about lowering greenhouse gas emissions. We can just adapt to climate change ([UNEP](#)).  
**Truth:** The world's developing countries collectively need between US\$215 billion and US\$387 billion per year to adapt to climate change. Even wealthy nations will struggle to afford the cost of adaptation, which in some cases will require radical measures, such as displacing vulnerable communities, relocating vital infrastructure, or changing staple foods ([UNEP](#)).

Ask the participants: Why do you think these myths spread? Where do people usually get disinformation about climate policies? How can young people fact-check and combat disinformation?

Conclude by emphasizing: Fact-based discussions empower communities to take action and engage in meaningful debates on climate policies.

## 2.14 Your Turn to Engage: Practical Activity

### Instructions:

- Ask participants to open the Fast Fashion Footprint Quiz on their devices: <https://www.thredup.com/fashionfootprint/?srsId=AfmBOooBaraTraK77Z5sXsZrQ5Vt9jt0d2Hhv8zxUU9GHMXsnT66cyAx>
- Allow them 5 minutes to answer the questions.
- If devices are limited, they can take the quiz in pairs or small groups and discuss their answers.
- Once everyone has their results, ask:
  - Were you surprised by your fashion footprint? Why or why not?
  - Which habits contribute most to your footprint?
  - What sustainable fashion choices could help reduce your impact?
- List practical solutions participants can adopt, such as:

### Practical solutions:

- Buying second-hand or swapping clothes
- Choosing quality over quantity
- Repairing clothes instead of discarding them
- Supporting ethical and sustainable brands

**Debate: Ask the participants:** What is one small change you can commit to making in your fashion habits?

Concluding with: **Individual choices contribute to collective impact and small changes in consumer habits can guide sustainable fashion trends.**

## EU projects for youth on engagement and climate

Armenian youth and climate projects:

- Education and Awareness, Armenia Tree Project: <https://www.armeniatree.org/education-and-awareness>
- Young people in Armenia lead climate action, UNICEF: [https://www.unicef.org/armenia/en/stories/climapolis-cop-young-people-armenia-lead-climate-action?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://www.unicef.org/armenia/en/stories/climapolis-cop-young-people-armenia-lead-climate-action?utm_source=chatgpt.com)
- SunChild Eco Clubs, Foundation for the Preservation of Wildlife and Cultural Assets (FPWC) <https://www.fpwc.org/contents/page/sunchild-eco-club-network>
- SunChild International Environmental Festival, Foundation for the Preservation of Wildlife and Cultural Assets (FPWC) <https://sunchild.am/>
- Environmental Education, AUA Acopian Center for the Environment: <https://ace.aua.am/function-areas/environmental-education/>
- Environmental Informational Portal: <https://www.ecolur.org/en/>
- Environmental films: <https://www.ecolur.org/en/news/films/>
- ArAves, Bird ID Quiz <https://araves.org/bird-id-quiz/>

European-funded opportunities and events:

- European Youth Event (EYE) (16-30): <https://european-youth-event.europarl.europa.eu/en>
- Erasmus+ Youth Exchanges or Training Courses  
e.g.: TC "Guardians of Green: Preventing forest fires by protecting nature": [https://www.instagram.com/p/C\\_vRx7VohJW/](https://www.instagram.com/p/C_vRx7VohJW/) [https://www.instagram.com/p/DDb6GIBIoHj/?img\\_index=1](https://www.instagram.com/p/DDb6GIBIoHj/?img_index=1)

Educational and advocacy programs:

- The Young Energy Ambassadors (YEA) program (18-35): [https://youth.europa.eu/news/drive-transition-become-young-energy-ambassador\\_en](https://youth.europa.eu/news/drive-transition-become-young-energy-ambassador_en)
- European Climate Pact Ambassadors: [https://climate-pact.europa.eu/get-involved/become-pact-ambassador\\_en](https://climate-pact.europa.eu/get-involved/become-pact-ambassador_en)

Contests and funding opportunities:

- European Charlemagne Youth Prize (16-30 working on a European project, individually or in groups): [https://youth.europa.eu/news/take-part-european-charlemagne-youth-prize-2025\\_en](https://youth.europa.eu/news/take-part-european-charlemagne-youth-prize-2025_en)
- New European Bauhaus Prizes and NEB Boost for Small Municipalities: [https://new-european-bauhaus.europa.eu/index\\_en](https://new-european-bauhaus.europa.eu/index_en)

## Useful Resources

- SunChild Eco-clubs' documentaries: [https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLoJF49ticCxz\\_r-eJwsGcatld5zDH8PXC&si=9ksBTliG7JKGjW3X](https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLoJF49ticCxz_r-eJwsGcatld5zDH8PXC&si=9ksBTliG7JKGjW3X)
- Alternative Youth Center: <https://apy.am/en/alternative-space>
- What is civic engagement? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x6bNwmrBPXI>
- Booklet on Sustainability - Climate change vocabulary: <https://www.crpe.ro/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Deliverable-D1.2-booklet-on-climate-change-vocabulary.pdf>
- Tools for climate action (15-24 y.o.): <https://www.unicef.org/lac/sites/unicef.org/lac/files/2021-07/tools-for-climate-action-02.pdf>
- Prepare to act! Practical tips for climate advocacy and action (15-24 y.o.): <https://www.unicef.org/lac/media/28571/file/prepare-to-act.pdf>

Videos:

- E.g., Climate Change Explained series: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5kuHd6b5ZY0&list=PL8HWK0G9m3B4J\\_7mEAo5aJclmYt2-P8XY&ab\\_channel=IntergovernmentalPanelonClimateChange%28IPCC%29](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5kuHd6b5ZY0&list=PL8HWK0G9m3B4J_7mEAo5aJclmYt2-P8XY&ab_channel=IntergovernmentalPanelonClimateChange%28IPCC%29)
- V2: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jS0ZlUtsQHg&ab\\_channel=EuropeanEnvironmentAgency](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jS0ZlUtsQHg&ab_channel=EuropeanEnvironmentAgency)
- V3: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0DSJpTqMrNA&ab\\_channel=WorldBank](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0DSJpTqMrNA&ab_channel=WorldBank)
- V4: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g9uLN8oRbMw&ab\\_channel=PADFORG](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g9uLN8oRbMw&ab_channel=PADFORG)
- V5 (RO): [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ir4DgZFTbuY&ab\\_channel=DWDDocumentary](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ir4DgZFTbuY&ab_channel=DWDDocumentary)

Useful data

- <https://www.unicef.org/climate-action>
- [https://ed.ted.com/ted\\_ed\\_collections/our-changing-climate](https://ed.ted.com/ted_ed_collections/our-changing-climate)

Trivia and quizzes:

- <https://climatekids.nasa.gov/trivia/>
- <https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/test-your-knowledge-climate-change/>
- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/z48hqp3>



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